THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) : (a) There is no Central or Centrally Sponsored Scheme under which Child Welfare Centres are functioning. However, for welfare and development of children in tribal and backward regions, 598 projects in Bihar and 326 projects in Maharashtra were sanctioned upto Eighth Five Year Plan under Centrally Sponsored Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme. Apart from that 177 Creches, 230 Centres for Early Childhood Education and 159 Centres under Balwadi Nutrition Programme were functioning in Bihar. In Maharashtra, 1444 Creches and 957 Centres under Balwadi Nutrition Programme were functioning.

(b) and (c) The World Bank Assistance to the tune of Rs. 76.29 crores was available for 210 ICDS Projects in Bihar during Eighth Five Year Plan. No World Bank Assistance was available for Maharashtra during Eighth Five Year Plan. The support from UNICEF was available for supply of equipment and material such as jeeps, baby weighing scales, projectors. etc.

[English]

Construction of Bridges and National Highways in West Bengal

696. SHRI AMAR ROY PRADHAN : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) the bridges and National Highways constructed in West Bengal during Eighth Five Year Plan and to be constructed during Ninth Plan;

(b) whether the work undertaken on these bridges and National Highways is behind the scheduled time;

(c) if so, the reasons for the inordinate delay; and

(d) the corrective measures taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN) : (a) 1. **Eighth Five Year Plan:**

(i) **Bridges** : Construction of 12 Nos of bridges have been completed during the Eighth Five Year Plan.

(ii) **Roadworks** :In addition to works of miscellaneous nature such as replacement of culverts, improvement of riding quality etc., four laning of 77.4 km length of NHs and construction of one bypass by Public Works Department and improvement of 23 km. to intermediate lane by Border Roads Organisation were undertaken.

2. **Ninth Plan:**

(i) **Bridges** : 28 Nos of bridges with estimated cost of about Rs. 84.65 crore are proposed to be taken up for replacement/reconstruction.

(ii) **Roads:** About 34 Nos of improvement works falling in different categories such as widening to two lanes and four lanes including strengthening of existing pavement inclusive of the works of miscellaneous nature such as improvement of riding quality, providing hard shoulder with estimated cost of Rs. 203.50 crore are proposed to be taken up.

(b) Yes Sir, construction of few bridges is running behind schedule.

(c) and (d) The delay in case of bridges is due to some contractural problems. Works are reviewed periodically and the State Government is being continuously pursued to remove the bottlenecks and settle the contractual issues leading to early completion of the project.

Financial Assistance for Maharashtra State Road Transport Corporation

697. SHRI MADHAV RAO PATIL : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Maharashtra State Road Transport Corporation is running into heavy losses for the last three years;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and

(c) the financial assistance provided by the Government to Maharashtra State Road Transport Corporation during the said period?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN) : (a) and (b) Yes Sir. The details are as under:-

Year	Loss (Rs. in Crores)
1995-96	3.17
1996-97	136.24
1997-98 (R.E.)	114.78

Reasons for losses are as under :—

(i) Operations on uneconomic obligatory routes;

(ii) Operations on routes falling on bad roads causing high cost of maintenance;

(iii) Concessions to students, physically handicapped, Government Servants etc.;

(iv) Uneconomic fares ;

(v) Increase in Prices of diesel and petroleum products;

(vi) Payment of arrears against Labour Settlement;

(vii) Payment of Ad-hoc Ex-gratia to some employees;

(viii) Payment of Ex-gratia to all employees;

(ix) Increase in Gratuity limit;

(x) Enhancement of the rate of P.F. subscription.

(c) No financial assistance has been provided to Maharashtra State Road Transport Corporation either by the State Government or Central Government during the said period.

Pulse Rate

698. SHRI K.A. SANGTAM : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether pulse rate is very high in Nagaland and varies from town to town;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor and the remedial measures being taken/proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard; and

(c) the comparative pulse rate in other North-Eastern States, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA) : (a) No Sir. However, pulse rate varies as per the distance between two short Distance Charging Centres within Nagaland, which is a Long Distance Charging Area (LDCA).

(b) Not applicable in view of (a) above.

(c) The charging of calls in other North-Eastern States is on the same pattern which is applicable within Nagaland as well as in other parts of the country. The details are given below :

Pulse Rate

	Within the State		Outside the State (To other parts of the country)
	Maximum	Minimum	
1. Arunacahal Pradesh	180 sec.	4 sec.	Upto 2 sec.
2. Manipur	180 sec.	8 sec.	-do-
3. Meghalya	180 sec.	4 sec.	-do-
4. Mizoram	180 sec.	4 sec.	-do-
5. Nagaland	180 sec.	8 sec.	-do-
6. Tripura	180 sec.	8 sec.	-do-
7. Assam	180 sec.	4 sec.	-do-

LPTs to be Upgraded during Ninth Plan

699. SHRI A. VENKATESH NAIK : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) the details of LPTs proposed to be upgraded in Ninth Plan, State-wise;

(b) whether the Government of Karnataka has submitted any proposal for the upgradation of LPTs into HPTs;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the land for the purpose has already been acquired;

(e) if so, the reasons for not starting the upgradation work; and

(f) the present position of the proposals?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) A statement is enclosed.

(b) to (f) A proposal for upgradation of Low Power TV transmitter (LPT) at Raichur to High Power TV transmitter (HPT) has been received from Government of Karnataka and the scheme has been sanctioned.

Implementation of the project will be taken up after State Government hands over the identified site, depending on availability of resources and provision of other infrastructural facilities.

Statement

Existing LPTs proposed to be upgraded to HPTs in Phases

State	Location
1	2
Andhra Pradesh	Warangal
Assam	Guwahati DD II Silchar DD II
Bihar	Jamshedpur Patna DD II
Gujarat	Surat
Jammu & Kashmir	Kathua Srinagar DD II
Karnataka	Hassan Mangalore Mysore Raichur
Kerala	Cannanore Cochin DD II Trivandrum DD II